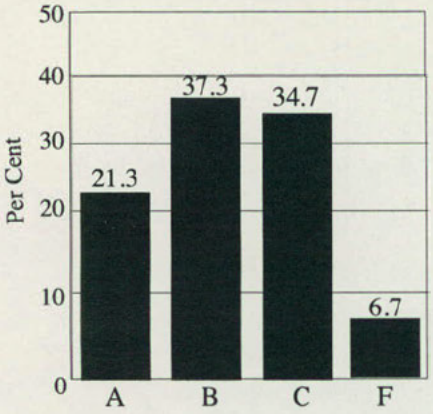
Reference Copy

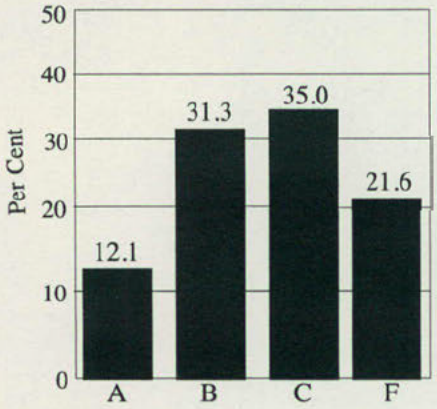
Social Studies 30

Diploma Examination Results
Examiners' Report for June 1993

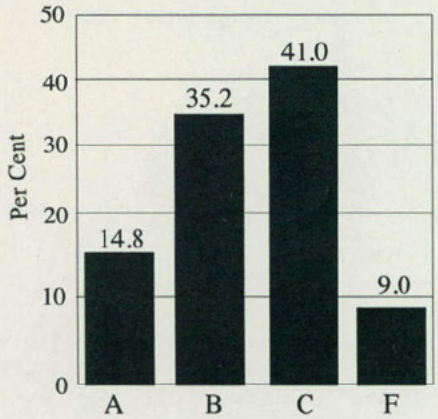
School-Awarded Mark



Diploma Examination Mark



Final Course Mark



The summary information in this report provides teachers, school administrators, students, and the general public with an overview of results from the June 1993 administration of the Social Studies 30 Diploma Examination. This information is most helpful when used in conjunction with the detailed school and jurisdiction reports that have been mailed to schools and school jurisdiction offices. An annual provincial report containing a detailed analysis of the combined January, June, and August results is published each year.

Description of the Examination

The Social Studies 30 Diploma Examination consists of two parts: a multiple-choice section worth 70% and a written-response section worth 30% of the total examination mark.

Achievement of Standards

The information reported is based on the final course marks achieved by 12 735 students who wrote the June 1993 examination.

- 91.0% of these students achieved the acceptable standard (a final course mark of 50% or higher).
- 14.8% of these students achieved the standard of excellence (a final course mark of 80% or higher).

Overall, student achievement in Social Studies 30 was satisfactory. Students demonstrated a good grasp of Social Studies knowledge. In composing their essays, many students were able to express a clear understanding of the issue under discussion and were more aware of how to develop and organize an argumentative paper.

Provincial Averages

- The average school-awarded mark was 67.5%.
- The average diploma examination mark was 61.8%.
- The average final course mark, representing an equal weighting of the school-awarded mark and the diploma examination mark, was 65.0%.

Students
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[redacted]
Alberta
EDUCATION
#26054

Part A: Multiple Choice

Examination Blueprint

Part A: Multiple Choice has a value of 70 marks, one mark for each multiple-choice question. Each question is classified in two ways: according to the curricular content area (topic) being tested and according to the knowledge and skill objectives required to answer the question. The examination blueprint illustrates the distribution of questions in June 1993 according to these classifications.

All questions on the diploma examination require students to demonstrate knowledge of social studies content and to apply social studies skills to that knowledge base. The reporting categories below define the general types of questions that appear on the examination and the categories for which information is reported.

Question Classification by knowledge and skill Objectives	Question Classification by Topic		Total Questions
	Topic A: Political and Economic Systems Knowledge and application of facts, concepts, and generalizations related to the world's political and economic systems as outlined in the *Program of Studies*.	**Topic B: Global Interaction in the 20th Century** Knowledge and application of facts, concepts, and generalizations related to the interaction of nations since 1918 as outlined in the *Program of Studies*.	
Comprehension of Information and Ideas These questions require students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of generalizations, key concepts, and facts related to social studies content.	1, 2, 3, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 27, 28, 33	36, 37, 41, 43, 47, 49, 54, 59, 60, 67, 68, 69	24
Interpretation and Analysis of Information and Ideas These questions require students to demonstrate their knowledge of social studies content by interpreting and analysing information and ideas.	6, 7, 8, 11, 17, 19, 22, 23, 26, 31, 32, 34	39, 42, 48, 51, 56, 57, 58, 62, 63, 65, 66	23
Synthesis and Evaluation of Information and Ideas These questions require students to demonstrate and apply their knowledge of social studies content by synthesizing information and ideas and evaluating their accuracy and worth.	4, 5, 9, 10, 18, 20, 24, 25, 29, 30, 35	38, 40, 44, 45, 46, 50, 52, 53, 55, 61, 64, 70	23
Total Questions	**35**	**35**	**70**

Results

Results are reported in average raw scores. Total Part A: 45.1 out of 70. Subtest results for Part A:*

by Topic

- Political and Economic Systems: 22.5 out of 35
- Global Interaction in the 20th Century: 22.6 out of 35

by Knowledge and Skill Objectives

- Comprehension of Information and Ideas: 14.5 out of 24
- Interpretation and Analysis of Information and Ideas: 15.4 out or 23
- Synthesis and Evaluation of Information and Ideas: 15.2 out of 23

*Readers are cautioned **not** to compare subtest results because the subtests are not of equal difficulty. Instead, readers should compare these provincial subtest results with their own school results.

Question-by-Question Results

Question	Key	Difficulty*
1	B	75.0
2	D	69.4
3	B	77.1
4	D	47.9
5	D	55.1
6	B	81.1
7	A	74.2
8	D	83.1
9	A	71.5
10	D	76.4
11	C	69.4
12	D	29.8
13	A	78.7
14	B	57.1
15	D	78.3
16	A	39.2
17	C	70.7
18	D	60.0
19	B	60.9
20	A	71.6
21	D	72.4
22	B	50.7
23	C	64.4
24	C	61.4
25	A	52.3
26	B	39.9
27	D	39.5
28	B	58.2
29	B	73.1
30	A	64.4
31	A	72.5
32	D	66.6
33	C	69.4
34	C	77.8
35	B	61.5
36	C	55.9
37	B	49.7
38	C	80.7
39	D	73.9
40	A	80.3
41	C	58.5
42	C	64.4
43	B	82.0
44	B	31.9
45	C	56.6
46	D	71.6
47	B	80.1
48	C	67.3
49	B	60.1
50	D	85.5
51	A	83.3
52	A	54.7
53	C	77.5
54	A	57.8
55	D	57.8
56	B	72.6
57	D	62.7
58	A	65.9
59	C	69.7
60	D	27.1
61	A	79.0
62	B	52.5
63	A	68.4
64	B	62.7
65	C	61.8
66	B	59.5
67	A	35.5
68	D	64.2
69	C	64.3
70	C	84.2

*Difficulty—percentage of students answering the question correctly

The table on the left shows question-by-question results and the keyed answers. Parallel tables appear in the school reports and in the jurisdiction reports. Comparison of school results with provincial results may show areas of strength and weakness in instructional programs.

Examiners' Comments

The multiple-choice section of the examination requires students to go beyond simply recalling information and to apply their knowledge and thinking skills. Students must demonstrate that they understand social studies concepts; that they comprehend historical, political, and economic relationships; and that they can interpret and evaluate social studies information and ideas.

Percentage of Students Correctly Answering Selected Multiple-Choice Questions

The following table gives results for six questions selected from the examination. For each question, statistics are given for three student groups. The comments on pages 4 and 5 discuss some of the decisions that students may have made and some of the skills they may have used to answer these questions correctly.

Student Group	Question Number					
	25	26	33	43	44	60
All students	52.3	39.9	69.4	82.0	31.9	27.1
Students achieving the standard of excellence (80% or higher, or A) on the whole examination	85.4	72.7	90.8	97.4	61.1	63.2
Students achieving the acceptable standard who received marks between 50% and 64%, or C, on the whole examination	44.5	31.1	66.1	79.8	26.0	17.0

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Use the following description to answer questions 25 and 26.

- Many competing political parties have strong ideological beliefs, but the majority are committed to basic democratic freedoms.
- Broad consensus and co-operation among social classes is often lacking.
- The electoral system is based on proportional representation.
- Diverse cultural/ethnic groups are often reluctant to entrust their interests to major political parties.

25. According to the description, government decision making would **most** likely be made

- *A. by a coalition
- B. on the basis of petitions
- C. by a ruling elite
- D. on the basis of opinion polls

26. The description is **most** typical of nations in

- A. Africa
- *B. Europe
- C. South America
- D. North America

Questions 25 and **26** required students to recognize a particular political context from a list of four descriptors. To answer the questions correctly, students had to demonstrate their knowledge and critical thinking skills by recognizing specific concepts such as proportional representation and assessing their effect in determining the nature of government decision making. As well, students were required to identify a location in which these descriptors would collectively apply.

Students found **question 25** somewhat difficult, with 52.4% of all students answering correctly, However, 85.4% of those achieving the **standard of excellence** answered correctly.

Many students found **question 26** to be difficult: 40% chose the correct response. The fact that 33% of all students (38% of those achieving the acceptable standard with marks between 50% and 64%) concluded that the setting described was typical of North America suggests that many students are not certain of the meaning and implementation of proportional representation.

33. Which of the following generalizations about leadership is true of **both** democracy and dictatorship?

- A. Leaders usually legitimize their power by convincing the public of their natural right to rule.
- B. Leaders are often violently replaced if they become unresponsive to the demands of the public.
- *C. Leaders often emerge when they are able to articulate and personify the wishes and goals of the public.
- D. Leaders quickly lose their power and influence when their goals are different from those of the public.

In **question 33,** the alternatives themselves served as a data source. Students were required to comprehend and evaluate four generalizations on leadership to determine which one has a common application to both democracy and dictatorship. Many students (69.4%) chose the correct response suggesting that they were able to apply appropriately their power of judgement and their knowledge about the two major political systems studied in Social Studies 30.

43. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935, the "Night of the Broken Glass" of 1938, and the "Final Solution" of 1942 were all events leading to the Nazi

- **A.** efforts to develop and implement euthanasia programs
- * **B.** holocaust involving European Jews during the Second World War
- **C.** invasion of the Soviet Union and the Balkan region of Europe
- **D.** decision to invade and occupy France and the Low Countries

Questions 43 required students to recall certain historical events and to recognize the relationship among them. The question was relatively easy as 82% of all students and 97.4% of those achieving the **standard of excellence** answered correctly.

Use the following map to answer questions 44 and 45.

—from *The Path to Destruction*

Question 44 was one of two questions based on a map of Europe during the 1920s. The question tested students' ability to determine the most accurate title for the map by interpreting and synthesizing all of the information presented. The fact that 50% of all students (55% of those achieving the acceptable standard with marks between 50% and 64%) concluded that the best title for the map was "Settlements of the Treaty of Versailles" suggests that many students failed to review carefully the key features shown and grasp the connection among them, for example, the legend "French alliances in the 1920s" and the highlighted "France occupied the Ruhr in 1923." However, 61.1% of those students achieving the **standard of excellence** did answer correctly.

44. What would be the **best** title for this map?

- **A.** Results of the Munich Pact
- * **B.** France Searches for Security
- **C.** France Dominates Central Europe
- **D.** Settlements of the Treaty of Versailles

60. The international agreement that attempted to restrict the development of nuclear weapons to certain Great Powers only was the

- **A.** Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
- **B.** Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty
- **C.** Partial Test Ban Treaty
- * **D.** Non-proliferation Treaty

Question 60 asked students to recall and associate an international nuclear agreement with its central purpose. The question proved to be difficult: 27.1% chose the correct response. 52% of all students (62% of those achieving the acceptable standard with marks between 50% and 64%) concluded that the attempt to limit the spread of nuclear weapons was the goal of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty. This suggests that many students, besides misunderstanding the intent of SALT, may have assumed that the word "restrict" in the stem matched with "limitation" in alternative B, or that they simply did not comprehend the meaning of the term "proliferation."

Part B: Written Response

The results for the written-response section of the Social Studies 30 Diploma Examination are tabulated according to the percentage of students achieving at each level (1 to 5) in each of the scoring categories. Each scoring category assesses somewhat different skills; consequently, individual student's scores are likely to vary from one category to another. Those students who achieve at or above the **standard of excellence** (80%) on the written-response section have scores of **(4) Proficient** or**(5) Excellent** for all scoring categories. Students just meeting the acceptable standard (50%) on the written-response section have scores of **(3) Satisfactory** for some scoring categories but produce **(2) Limited** work for others. Students who produce **(3) Satisfactory** work for all scoring categories receive scores of 18 out of 30 on Part B.

Readers will find the results most meaningful in the context of the assignment and the scoring descriptors. The most useful starting place for reviewing these results is at the **(3) Satisfactory** level. The scoring guides that describe proficiency levels are in the *Diploma Examinations Program Bulletin Update, Social Studies 30, 1992-93 School Year*.

Examination Blueprint and Percentage Distribution of Scores

The written-response section contributes 30% of the total examination mark. Students are required to write one complete and unified essay in which they discuss the importance and complexity of an issue and rationally defend their position by using supportive, relevant evidence. The organization of arguments should show evidence of logical thought that should persuade the reader. Students are expected to make use of their critical and creative thinking skills to demonstrate complex and independent thought.

Part B: Written Response has a total value of 30 marks: 10 marks each for *Defence of Position* and *Quality of Examples* and five marks each for *Exploration of the Issue* and *Quality of Language and Expression*.

Scoring Category	Proportion of Total Mark (%)	Percentage Distribution of Scores					
		(5) Excellent	(4) Proficient	(3) Satisfactory	(2) Limited	(1) Poor	Ins *
1. Exploration of the Issue	5	2.8	15.5	41.3	33.9	5.9	0.7
2. Defence of Position	10	2.7	16.4	44.2	31.9	4.2	0.7
3. Quality of Examples	10	2.4	13.2	37.6	37.0	9.1	0.7
4. Quality of Language and Expression	5	3.2	20.0	59.4	15.4	1.3	0.7

* **Ins** (Insufficient) is a special category that includes students who did not attempt the assignment, who wrote too little to evaluate, or who wrote answers that were completely off topic.

Note: The shaded portion represents the percentage of students who achieved or exceeded a **(3) Satisfactory** level of performance.

Topic A

Some individuals believe that governments should promote the goals of the welfare state to provide for the common good of society. Other individuals believe that promoting the goals of the welfare state is not the best way to provide for the common good. Still others feel that governments should combine the goals of the welfare state with those from other economic approaches.

Should governments emphasize the goals of the welfare state in their nations' economies?

In your essay, take and defend a position on this issue.

Topic B

Since the end of the Cold War, some nations view military alliances as totally unnecessary to maintain global peace. Other nations believe that military alliances are still important to ensure national security and world stability. Still others believe that the role and purpose of military alliances among nations should be reviewed and re-evaluated according to prevailing international conditions.

Are military alliances among nations still necessary?

In your essay, take and defend a position on this issue.

Examiners' Comments

The results of the written component of the June 1993 examination showed a comparable average score to that achieved provincially in January. This result continued the upward trend established in January 1992 and in January and June 1991.

The revised categories and scoring requirements of the written-response part of the examination—*Exploration of the Issue* and *Quality of Examples* introduced for the school year 1992-93—continued, overall, to prompt students to produce encouraging results. Many markers and those teachers involved in standards confirmation commented that many students effectively and successfully integrated their understanding of an issue into the text of their writing, avoiding a blunt, two-sided description of opposing value positions in a contrived introductory paragraph. As well, many markers noted the rich array of supportive evidence drawn from historical and contemporary events selected and elaborated by an increasing number of students. For example, many students writing on Topic B supported their position by dealing at length with the expanded role of the United Nations, citing its role in the Gulf War and in other international trouble spots.

These observations were made with some reservations. Too many students chose to repeat, sometimes verbatim, the preamble given for each issue in the examination booklet as a sufficient display of their understanding of the issue's significance and complexity. Similarly, while students are encouraged to incorporate examples, ideas, and information from the multiple-choice section of the examination to enrich their essays, a noticeable number of students, without much thought to elaboration or context, inappropriately applied directly copied material.

While less than one percent of the papers marked were deemed insufficient, many markers expressed disappointment at the seemingly increasing number of students who, through an apparent deliberate decision, avoided dealing specifically with the issue under discussion. For such students, the Topic A issue, "Should governments emphasize the goals of the welfare state in their nations' economies?" served as a launching pad to write only and at length about the nature and characteristics of various economic systems. The relevance and application of such descriptive material in developing and supporting a position for this issue appeared to escape the comprehension of these writers.

Many markers, including teachers who confirmed standards, also noted that, generally, students demonstrated less confusion and more comfort with the shades of subtlety and meaning associated with key social studies concepts and ideas. There were, however, some interesting exceptions. Too many students, in dealing with Topic A, perceived Sweden as the only welfare state in existence, the United States as the last bastion of untrammeled free enterprise, and Canada as lying somewhere between the two. Many students, who wrote on Topic B, had difficulty articulating the conceptual differences between the actions of alliances (balance of power) and those of the United Nations (collective security). As one marker commented, "Many students, in regarding the United Nations as an alliance, may be attempting to impose a degree of order to recent complex events."

A further concern to many markers and those teachers involved in confirming standards involved the scoring category of *Quality of Language and Expression*. Far too many students demonstrated undue haste and difficulty in expressing themselves clearly and in using the correct conventions of language. A disappointing number of papers displayed imprecise or poor word choices, limited vocabulary, and even words or sentences that were meaningless. Often, inappropriate analogies were used to describe profound ideas. These developments point to the importance of students taking time to edit and proofread finished work carefully—time that should be more readily available to students during the 1994 administrations of the examinations with the addition of a discretionary half hour of writing time. (See *Social Studies Information Bulletin, 1993-94* School Year).

Students achieving the *acceptable standard* were able to express an adequate understanding of the complexity and significance of an issue. These writers paid attention, but not in sustained contextual development, to the principles underlying different viewpoints associated with an issue and generally established an historical or a contemporary frame of reference to an issue's importance. Students achieving the *standard of excellence* perceptively investigated the complexity and significance of the issue, often throughout the fabric of their response. They indicated that the issue was meaningful and relevant to them personally and recognized its complexity by explaining and qualifying their thoughts. For example, on Topic A, these students noted that most countries commonly studied are to greater or lesser extents welfare states depending often on government commitments to the common good. On Topic B, these students expressed genuine concern with regard to the establishment of international stability since the end of the Cold War.

Many students continued to demonstrate an awareness that a stonger position paper is developed by establishing a basis for each argument or reason, and applying specific historical and contemporary examples as supportive evidence for each argument. In this respect, more students appear to be planning the structure of their essays through webbing and outlines. Students achieving the *acceptable standard* supported their position with several adequate arguments. Although these arguments lacked in elaboration and depth of understanding, they were connected to the issue under discussion and to the position taken. Supportive evidence used by these writers to bolster an argument was generally relevant, but not error free, and more often general rather than specific in presentation. Such writers, despite making minor errors, demonstrated control of conventions.

Students achieving below the satisfactory level did not link their examples in a meaningful way to their positions. They developed evidence primarily in descriptive terms, unloading as much data as they could recall and thus exhibiting little sense into its organization and applicability. Superficial descriptions of detail and the presentation of extraneous information resulted in lower scores.

Students achieving the *standard of excellence* composed powerful and forceful arguments that were firmly rooted in the application of germane, well-chosen evidence—evidence that in many instances supported a qualified position. Students at this level wrote carefully organized essays essentially free from errors in mechanics and grammar.

Overall, it was apparent that the demands of the June 1993 assignments were within the comprehension of most students. Marker concerns again brought forward regarding the constraints of examination conditions, may be greatly alleviated with the addition of a discretionary half hour of writing time set for 1994.

For further information, contact Barry Jonas or Elana Scraba at the Student Evaluation Branch, 427-0010.